

Mission Newsletter



November - December 2012

Number 101

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Luke 2: 10-13

Jesus Our Blessed Hope

For millions of people, the Christmas season means nothing more than parties, gifts, decorations, and time off work. For Christians, however, this time of year is a happy reminder of the hope we have because of Jesus Christ.

Before Jesus came, God seemed distant, hidden in the Holy of Holies in the temple, accessible only to the high priest. Worshipers wondered whether their sacrifices were acceptable. They doubted their salvation.

Christ means hope — to the person out of work, to the struggling single mother, to the dying believer. Even if you're just slogging your way through the disappointments of life, if you have Jesus, you have hope. And, he is not a false hope, a childish fairy tale that we wish will have a happy ending. When Christ rose from the dead, that ended the argument. Period. Our hope in him is solid and it is real.

Every year, as we celebrate Christmas, we renew that blessed hope. It reconfirms it for us if our vision has grown dim. It was settled long ago, so we don't have to doubt any more.

Jesus is the fulfillment of our hope, our deepest longings come true. ❀❀

Christmas!..... So Much More Than Lights & Gifts.....



Christmas 2011

Thanks Again for Supporting Christmas Gift Box Ministry

Faith Mission would like to express a very sincere thank-you to everyone who packed a Christmas Gift Box or contributed in any way to support this ministry. We have shipped a total of 794 gift boxes in the last 2 containers. These precious gifts will be distributed to the needy children in various areas of the country of Ukraine. Seeing their Christmas is on January 7th, we are quite hopeful that even the second container will arrive in Odessa before they celebrate Christmas. We have received a few boxes after our shipment left so in total we have just over 800 Gift Boxes this year.

A Renewed Hope.... After the Flood

(Translated and printed with permission from the Nov/Dec 2012 German Missions Nachrichten)

In the previous "Missions Nachrichten" (German) we had printed a plea for help for the flood victims. Thank you for the overwhelming response! (Faith Mission has also provided some financial support for the flood-stricken community.

At the end of September, I (Eduard Ewert – Germany) flew to Krimsk as a Missionswerk FriedensBote representative. As usually happens after such disasters, immediate help was very extensive. However, people soon returned to their normal routine and after a short time, the catastrophe is more or less forgotten.

The 50,000 residents of Krimsk, Russia will never forget that terrible night after one of the hottest summer days of July, 2012. For many, that night was their last. The official death toll of 171 victims has left many community people in a state of shock. The huge wave flooded more than 5,000 houses and destroyed many of them. The frightening flood water came at 2 o'clock at night, waking many people from their sleep. The warning equipment did not function because the electricity in the region had already been turned off at 10 o'clock the previous evening.

Before the deadly wave reached the town, it had spread out to create a river more than a kilometer in width. The powerful current destroyed everything in its path that was not securely fastened. Bridges, buildings, cars, animals, and pedestrians were swept away like toys! The aerial photos from those days show a disastrous picture.

The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, visited the town twice after the disaster. He ordered many volunteers and thousands of soldiers with heavy equipment to assist with an expedited cleanup operation. Both the mayor and the chairperson of the city council ended up going to prison because they had failed to warn the residents of the sleeping town.

Already during my flight to Krimsk, I



discussed the disaster with two Russian travelers. This was a perfect time for me to lead them to Jesus Christ, our only hope in the midst of such terrible disasters.

When I arrived in the town of Krasnodar, the temperature was still a very warm +30°C. During the six days in the area, I accompanied the leader of the Christian-Baptist Church of Krimsk, Sergei Kulkov. His 14 year-old VW Golf served us well as we made many urgent trips around the community.

Krimsk is located near the South-Russian area of "Krasnodar" not far from the Black Sea. The region is a very a beautiful vacation spot for many tourists. The combination of a lengthy summer season, the mild winter and the rich, fertile soil provide a bountiful harvest.

The Krasnodar region boasts many large businesses. Again and again we were astonished by the countless luxurious cars that passed us on the streets and highways. Sergei explained to me, that these people are mostly former mafia, who have obtained their wealth through some "shady" and illegal means. However, their businesses are now operating legally.

The people living in poverty, on the other extreme, constantly fight for their survival. If they should be able to build or repair, they construct their houses with Saman bricks – a mixture from clay and straw. These bricks can be produced practically free of charge. However, buildings constructed with these bricks will not withstand a severe flood such as the one that hit the region in July of 2012.

In the capital city of Krimsk, I observed many properties where entire buildings and belongings had been completely wiped "off the map!" The walls of the houses built with Saman-bricks could not withstand the pressures of the flood. In many homes, the bricks crumbled under the tremendous pressure. In some cases, the roof had fallen on the inhabitants, if they had not gotten to safety in time.

Beautiful gardens were covered with a thick layer of "Miljuta", the muddy sludge which the flood left behind. The harvest is completely destroyed. Many people, who were counting on the bountiful harvest for their winter staples, are bracing for a very hard season ahead.

The streets have been cleaned from all the debris which the flood water washed into the town. Uprooted trees and refuse has been cleared from the riverbed of the small river which flows through town. Here and there we see some small firms have posted temporary signs: "We have opened again". Slowly life returns to its usual rhythm.

Some large excavators are still busy at work. Buildings must be demolished because of foundations being damaged and washed away. Some deserted properties are boarded

up, waiting to be demolished. A sign on one property has only two words, but boldly states: "We live!" However, some signs are more painful to read, posting an official evacuation order by local authority.



We stopped to look at the massive cross, erected by the entrance to the city of Krimsk. On the base of the cross, someone had written a prayer: "God, protect this city". I saw similar monuments in several other towns.

The Orthodox Church still holds the claim to the territorial monopoly of power, declaring all other denominations unwanted, as sects and threats to the "Russian unity". So far, however, they are not

persecuting our Christian brothers and sisters.

Although the state has promised full compensation to the victims of the flood, for many the help is still very far away. For many, important personnel papers and passports were destroyed by the flood, delaying the compensation procedures. The courts are working on a lot of applications, and the bureaucracy stretches out for many months, if not years. Sergei told me about the most urgent concerns of his church family. Because so many families had lost all of their belongings, we went to a department store and packed Sergei's van with necessary household supplies. We provided the families with washing machines, refrigerators, cooking dishes, microwave ovens, warm blankets and other items.

I also had the opportunity to visit two Christian-Baptist churches in the city of Krimsk.



I presented part of the donation for the renovation work in one church and the rest for the sound system in the other church.

Moreover, the second congregation will use a part of the donation to fund some evangelistic expenses. Presenting these donations always brings double joy: for the receiver as well as for the giver. You, dear mission friends, are the givers. Our prayers are always that: "We as a mission team may be diligent mediators."

Just a few days after the flood, four men in two cars, came driving through the city of Krimsk. Using megaphones, the men shouted from their cars, that the next tidal wave was about to come down from the mountains behind the town. Panic spread

like wildfire! With terror in their eyes, thousands of people rushed onto the streets, shouting: "The water is coming!" Many packed up the few belongings they had, grabbed their children, and dashed for the hills. Some climbed up on the roof-tops. The streets were soon hopelessly blocked with vehicles as people tried to flee in their cars. In less than two hours, the town was practically deserted.

After a few hours, it was determined that this was a false alarm. These four young men had plotted to scare everyone away so they could loot the town. The emotions of many inhabitants flared. The four troublemakers were soon located, their cars were demolished, and after a while the police intervened and arrested the men.

The affected families will probably need years, for the wounds of the disastrous flood to heal. However, one thing was very obvious: The Christians in Krimsk were and are a very courageous group as they look after the needs of their neighbors – so different than the other citizens.

The Christians also saw that this natural disaster had stirred many unbelievers to consider the welfare of their soul. It is a prime time for the Church to share the message of Jesus. Some repented and committed their life to Jesus Christ.

The Bible has very clearly foretold a time of judgment. However, those who believe in Jesus Christ know there is security in Jesus in spite of all these disasters. Come what may, they know: "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." (Prov.18,10). This will never change. Our Christian brothers and sisters in Krimsk are excited to spread this wonderful message. It is now more important than ever that we uphold these people in our prayers!

Eduard Ewert – Missionwerk FriedensBote - Germany

Update from Henry Penner....(Dec.4,2012)

Follow-up to article in Sept-Oct FM- Newsletter

"And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." Mark 10:27

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus to all our readers and Faith Mission supporters. Here is a brief update on my recuperating. After returning home from Boundary Trails Health Center on October 5, I was still wearing the halo. It felt so good to be home even though everything was different than it used to be. I had an appointment with Dr. Johnson at HSC in Winnipeg on November 30, exactly four months after my accident. After doing x-rays he said he was pleased with my progress and they would remove the halo and give me a neck brace. Praise the Lord! I finally got rid of the seven pound weight that held up my head for four months. So, what at first seemed impossible to us, we can now see that with God anything is possible. I can actually hold my head

without the brace but the Dr. says we have come such a long way after such a big fracture we should not take any risks. He wants me to use the neck brace for 6 weeks and then maybe switch to a support collar for another 6 weeks. Each day, when I stop and ponder how the Lord has helped and blessed us in spite of our unworthiness, I find it so very humbling! As we read in verses 2 - 4 in Psalm 30: "O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."

Thank-you, once again for all your prayers, visits, phone calls, support, and encouragement! We want to give all the Honor and Glory to God in the Highest!

Henry and Trudy Penner


Special Christmas Greetings from
all of us at Faith Mission!
May you feel the Joy of the
Saviour's Birth in your Home
during this Christmas Season!

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Office Hours



Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Clothing sorting & baling:

Thursday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Clothing may also be dropped off in the small white trailer at the south end of the warehouse building. This trailer is open 24 hours a day, emptied on a regular basis, however, if you have more than a few bags or boxes, please call ahead to arrange delivery.

PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CLOTHING DONATIONS OUTSIDE!

Volunteers Welcome!

If your Youth Group, Bible Study group, or Ladies' Sewing Circle would like to volunteer for an afternoon or evening (Monday-Saturday), please contact the office to make arrangements.

Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. solicits your gifts for the purpose identified in this appeal. However, if the project for which the gifts are received has been fully funded or cannot be completed for reasons beyond the control of the charity, the board reserves the right to use such funds for other similar projects.

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Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. is a nonprofit, registered charitable organization based in Winkler, Manitoba. Faith Mission was incorporated on May the 16th, 1994 in the Province of Manitoba

Purpose of Faith Mission

- to provide humanitarian and spiritual aid to the people of former Communist communities of the world.
- to call others to pray for the suffering people in the world.
- to provide information about the people of the former Communist communities to fellow Christians in North America.

The **Faith Mission Newsletter** is printed bimonthly and mailed at no cost to those people who have supported us in the past or to those who request information about Faith Mission.

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